

REMARKS

Please reconsider the application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. Applicant thanks the Examiner for carefully considering this application. Further, the Applicant thanks the Examiner for the courtesies extended during the telephone interview dated March 16, 2003. An agreement was reached that "propagating a clock signal from a clock driver to a clock grid via a non-exterior region of the clock grid rather than propagating the clock signal to the clock grid via an exterior region of the clock grid" (page 7, para. 28) appears to be novel. Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

Disposition of Claims

Claims 1-14 are pending in this application. Claims 1, 5, 9, and 13 are independent. Claim 11 has been cancelled. The remaining claims depend, directly or indirectly, from claims 1, 5, 9, and 13.

Objection(s)

The claims are objected to for not being numbered consecutively in Arabic numerals. The claim numbering has been amended in this reply in view of this objection. Accordingly, withdrawal of this objection is respectfully requested.

Claim 11 is objected to where "connect" should be -- connects --. Claim 11 has been cancelled. Accordingly, the objection is now moot.

Rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C § 102

Claims 1-14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,311,313 B1 ("the '313 patent") issued to Camporese *et al.* Claims 1, 5, 9, and 13 have been amended in this reply to clarify the present invention recited. To the extent that this rejection may still apply to the amended claims, the rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 1, 5, 9, and 13 disclose a method and apparatus for driving a signal onto a clock grid. The clock grid connects to an output of a clock driver at a connection point where the connection point resides at a non-exterior region of the clock grid. The signal is propagated through a transmission structure that resides at a non-exterior region of the clock grid.

Contrastingly, in Figs. 2-6 and 8-11 of the '313 patent, a grid tree network for distributing a clock signal is disclosed. The grid tree network is a hierarchical grid tree. For example, the '313 patent refers to a first level tree wiring network (201) and a second level of tree wires (203), where the second level of tree wires (203) distributes the clock signal to a number of points on an X-Y grid (204) (col. 4, lines 40-50).

In the '313 patent, the multiple levels of the grid tree network are exterior to the X-Y grid (204). The '313 patent does not distribute the clock signal using a transmission structure residing at a non-exterior region of the clock grid.

The present invention propagates a clock signal from a clock driver to a clock grid via a non-exterior region of the clock grid rather than propagating the clock signal to the clock grid via an exterior region of the clock grid (page 7, para. 28). Advantageously, a signal from a clock driver to a particular point on the clock grid experiences less RC delay than in the case where the clock driver is connected to a peripheral region of the

clock grid. Furthermore, a reduction in clock skew among components operatively connected to the clock grid may occur.

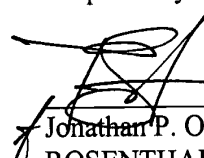
In view of the above, the '313 patent fails to show or suggest the present invention as recited in the claims 1, 5, 9, and 13 as amended. Thus, the claims 1, 5, 9, and 13 as amended are patentable over the '313 patent. Dependent claims are allowable for at least the same reasons. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Conclusions

Applicant believes this reply to be fully responsive to all outstanding issues and place this application in condition for allowance. If this belief is incorrect, or other issues arise, do not hesitate to contact the undersigned or his associates at the telephone number listed below. Please apply any charges not covered, or any credits, to Deposit Account 50-0591 (Reference Number 03226.136001; P6821).

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Respectfully submitted,

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